

## CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method for managing the occurrence or risk of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the method comprising:

- 5 (a) identifying a plurality of stages of operative care, including at least a preoperative stage, an intraoperative stage, and a postoperative stage;
- (b) identifying one or more points-of-care within each identified stage of operative care;
- 10 (c) for each point-of-care, identifying one or a plurality of sources of measurable risk of surgical site infection;
- (d) for identified surgical site infection risks, identifying at least one practice for either or both managing or reducing the risks, either individually for each risk or collectively for more than one risk; and
- 15 (e) aligning the identified practice or practices within each point-of-care to provide a set of sequential practices throughout each of the stages of operative care in a manner that provides a desired management of the overall occurrence or risk of surgical site infection.

20 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the preoperative stage of operative care comprises at least the following points-of-care: preoperative assessment, operation scheduling, admissions, operation room entry.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the preoperative assessment point-of-care contains one or more of the following sources of diagnostic testing, laboratory test administration, patient education and instruction, patient risk assessment and management.

25 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the intraoperative stage of operative care comprises at least the following points-of-care: incision and wound closure.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the postoperative stage of operative care comprises at least the following points-of-care: operating room exit and patient follow-up.

6. A method for managing the risk or occurrence of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the method comprising:

5 (a) identifying a plurality of health care delivery practices appurtenant to a surgical procedure that contribute to or pose a risk of surgical site infection;

(b) grouping one or more of the identified practices into a plurality of points-of-care;

10 (c) aligning, monitoring and managing the operation of the points-of-care to provide a desired management of the overall occurrence or risk of surgical site infection.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the monitoring of the operation of the points-of-care employs the measurement of one or more compliance indicators.

8. The method of claim 6 wherein the monitoring of the operation of the points-of-care employs the measurement of one or more outcome indicators.

15 9. The method of claim 6 wherein an outcome indicator is the rate of incidence of surgical site infection.

10. The method of claim 6 wherein an outcome indicator is patient satisfaction.

11. The method of claim 6 wherein an outcome indicator is cost.

20 12. A system for managing the risk or occurrence of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the system comprising:

(a) identifying a plurality of stages of operative care, including at least a preoperative stage, an intraoperative stage and a postoperative stage;

(b) identifying one or more points-of-care within each identified stage of operative care;

25 (c) for each point-of-care, identifying one or a plurality of health care delivery practices that pose a source of measurable risk of surgical site infection;

(d) identifying one or more compliance indicators for one or a plurality of health care practices within each point-of-care whereby there is provided the ability to monitor the compliance indicators;

(e) aligning the health care delivery practices with the compliance to provide a  
5 perioperative process map of delivery practices spanning the plurality of stages of operative care.

13. A system for managing the risk or occurrence of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the system comprising:

(a) a perioperative process map of practices for the delivery of the surgical  
10 procedure, the map comprising a plurality of health care delivery practices and one or more indicators of compliance with the one or more health care practices; and

(b) means for monitoring the compliance indicators to achieve a desired level of management of the risk of surgical site infection for the surgical procedure.

14. The system of claim 13 further comprising means for recording the  
15 compliance indicators.

15. The system of claim 13 wherein the monitoring means comprises a software-encoded information management device.

16. The system of claim 13 wherein the monitoring means comprises a software-encoded information management device that is capable of operating across a  
20 network of computers.

17. The system of claim 15 wherein the information management device is delivered to one or more users via the internet.

18. The system of claim 13 further comprising means for monitoring one or more indicators of outcome.

19. The system of claim 18 wherein an outcome is the rate of the incidence of surgical site infection.

20. The system of claim 18 wherein an outcome is the patient satisfaction.

21. The system of claim 18 wherein an outcome is cost.

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